

improvement of US 17, as well as identifying any other major actions in the US 17 project area. Other potential major actions include proposed new developments, land use plans, pending or planned utility extensions, other roadway projects shown in the NCDOT TIP (see Section 1.8.1), and any other planned transportation projects, such as transit, rail service and airports. These effects are summarized in the 2004 *US 17 Indirect and Cumulative Impact Analysis*, the 2001 *Natural Systems Report*, and the 2010 *Indirect and Cumulative Effects Report*, incorporated by reference.

Improving US 17 from north of Jacksonville to south of New Bern in itself is not likely to induce extensive development within the project study area. While the urbanized area of Jacksonville is located south of the project site, it is not likely that this widening project would spur “path of development” growth in the Onslow County portion of the project. This presumption is based on several facts:

- The area is not currently served by water and sewer.
- The area is not on a long-range plan to receive water and sewer; county regulations stipulate that new development should be directed towards compact, targeted growth areas near existing towns.
- The area is predominantly in forest and agricultural use. The Croatan National Forest is located east of US 17 and this land is not readily available for development. Also, the soils in the area are more suited for agricultural uses.
- The Onslow County Citizens Comprehensive Plan advocates preservation of true open space, productive farms, woodlands, and important natural areas and discourages the “leapfrogging” of housing developments into the countryside, thus, destroying the rural character of the area, breaking up farmland, and making the provision of urban services costly to homebuyers and taxpayers alike.

Complementary land development, such as highway-oriented businesses (gas stations, rest stops, motels, etc.) are likely to develop near the site of the proposed US 17 Bypass interchange with NC 58. However, accessibility to the transportation facility is but one of the factors that influences growth and development. The presence of water and sewer, local political and economic conditions, location attractiveness, consumer preferences, and the rate and path of urbanization in the region all play a role in development.

Intersection of NC 58 and US 17 – The potential for project induced growth / complementary land development at this location is the greatest of all in the study area as this site is already served by water and sewer, has soils that can support development, and Jones County and the Town of Pollocksville operate under a pro-business climate that encourages commercial growth in the area.